

An Essay on
The Preparation of Homoeopathic Medicines
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The Preparation of Homoeopathic Medicines

On turning to the books of the dominant school of medicine for information about the minute action of therapeutic agents, we come to a rather barren field. We find such and such a medicine described as a tonic, a sedative or a stimulant, another as a febrifuge, or vermifuge, and still others as cathartic, purgative, or diuretic in their actions. All drugs in the old school are thus classed under general heads. But if we inquire about the specific difference between Senna, Epsom-salts, Jalappa, Castor oil,

or even Croton-oil, all of which with a number of others are classed under the head of purgatives, we derive no satisfaction whatsoever. All the information we obtain is this, that Croton-oil is a very violent, and Castor-oil a mild purgative and so on. The same we notice with regard to emetics —

Tartar emetic is declared to be a very violent, Ipecacuanha a milder and Squills a moderate emetic; these three medicines in the eye of the old school differing in degree only, not in kind.

Therefore medicines are classed there entirely according to their general properties, and their particular qualities are ignored, when yet the particular qualities of each medicine determine its real curative effects.

This hunting after generals and losing sight of particulars characterizes the old school in its operations and theories. So the delicate human system is regarded by them in practice as a coarse chemical vessel, to be reached from the stomach by chemical reagents, or tonics, cathartics, stimubants etc. And the diseases themselves strike their eyes only in the general forms of fevers, headaches, toothaches, diarrhoeas etc. — for most of which diseases they have one or some general remedies, which they apply in all cases, as, for instance, Quinine in all kinds of intermittent fevers — and for the particular form in which each of these diseases figures, they are entirely blind.

This mode of dealing in generals and neglecting particulars is carried out in the old school also in the preparation of their medicines. Provided the drugs have their necessary tonic, cathartic, purgative or diuretic effect, they care little, whether they are entirely pure, or have a slight touch of musk, camphor or other substance, with which they may have come in contact. They even mix pure substances secundum artem with a number of other substances, so that the original nature of the drug is entirely disguised, and it presents a mixture compositum, which it would be difficult even for analytical chemistry to resolve into its original constituents. They indeed preach

about the necessity of having pure drugs, but as they rarely prescribe a pure drug in its unalloyed form, the apothecaries are frequently not over-particular in securing a pure article in the first place.

How different it is, if we turn from these dealings in abstract generals to Homoeopathy, the true science of medicine, in which generals are qualified by particulars. In the new school of medicine each drug is considered as an individual; here the aim is not so much to seek similarities, and to arrange several drugs under the common head of cathartics, diuretics &c., but rather to endeavor to establish distinctions. Here are investigated the peculiar, attendant circumstances

or symptoms, with which Ipecacuanha
or Tartar. emetic. act as emetics, and
by this difference in the attendant symptoms
the selection of either medicine is de-
termined. Besides the radical difference
between the allopathic and homoeopathic
schools of medicine, which accrues from
a difference in the principles of cure —
allopathy maintaining that, "contraria
contrariis curantur" and homoeopathy
that, "similia similibus curantur" — there
is consequently another widely different
distinction, arising from the fact, that
homoeopathy has a strictly scientific or philo-
sophic basis, while that of allopathy is
spurious. So homoeopathy not only re-
cognizes each medicine as an individual,
so that no medicine can be applied

successfully in the place of another, but it also acknowledges a variety of species of headaches, toothaches, intermittent fevers, diarrhoeas etc. in fact it holds, that no diseases are ever perfectly alike in any two human beings. By this it is true the practice of medicine is more difficult and intricate in homoeopathy, than it is in allopathy, but it also increases infinitely the chances of cure!

Immortal glory therefore to our illustrious Hahnemann, the deep thinker and the great pathfinder, who first established the true powers of therapeutic agents, and who taught us to discriminate between the different species of medicines and diseases. By him also a new era

was opened in the preparation of medicines and all prescriptions, in which half a dozen simple drugs are mixed and muddled up, we must regard as remains of the Middle - Ages, when Alchemists tried to brew out of a mass of heterogeneous ingredients the balm of life.

The plan, by which Hahnemann developed the curative powers of medicines, was not the product of a sudden, preconceived theory, but it was based upon successive careful experiments. This keen observer, when he first undertook to determine the true action of drugs by studying their effects on the healthy human body, found, that in administering a large dose of a medicine

its action on the human body was so violent, that its leper, distinguishing features were entirely lost. In order to observe the effects of a drug in all its bearings, he was therefore obliged to reduce the quantity of the medicine so much, that it would still remain powerful enough to produce a perceptible deviation in the feeling of health on the part of the prover, nor effect him so much, that any of the various individual sensations, feelings and symptoms might be overpowered by the most prominent ones and thus be lost. At first he reduced the smallest quantity of a medicine as then used in allopathy, a hundred times, without, however, reaching thereby the limits of its efficacy. On the

contrary he still noticed a very distinct action of the drug, thus reduced, both upon the bodies of healthy and of sick persons; and these effects were not only noticed of poisons, but also of substances, which had been hitherto regarded as innocent. He therefore reduced that quantity again in the same way, making a ten thousandth part and again making a millionth part, without, however reaching that starting point, from which he again might ascend, or that forlorn hope of quantity, where the action of a drug would be imperceptible. Yes, most wonderful, he saw the medicine, thus attenuated, develop in a healthy person new symptoms, which he had not noticed before, when only a hundredth

part of the substance had been used.

It will be readily understood, that the founder of our school, startled by this most remarkable fact, endeavoured to reach the bottom of these truths, and he, therefore, proceeded in this direction, attenuating all the time, in order to see, whether in reality an end of the power of a medicine could be reached. At a certain period of his life he, finally, arrived at the thirtieth attenuation, or potency, as he calls it, for he maintains, that by this process of attenuation, a new power, i. e. the dynamic power of the drug is developed. This thirtieth power he seems to have selected as a stopping-place in practice, although it is most likely, that he admitted the practicability

of extending the line of attenuations still further; at least we find him experimenting with the 60th potency of Phnysa.

By such means the actions of the drugs became particularized by the founder of our school, and at the same time also the diseases themselves. For as Hahnemann had his attention directed to the particular symptoms caused by each medicine, he also noticed more particularly the symptoms by which the various general diseases are accompanied in sick persons, and he thus established various species of headache, toothache and in fact of all other diseases.

This leads me at once to discuss the particular mode of preparing homoeopathic medicines. For as I showed above, that the hunting after generals, which characterizes the old school in the classification of medicines and diseases, is also expressed in their mode of preparing their medicines, it must needs follow, that the desire of tracing particulars, which we notice in the new school of medicine, is also expressed in its mode of preparing medicines.

In the first place I must state, that we cannot be particular enough in the preparation of homoeopathic medicines. For the medicines must not only be absolutely pure, and unmixed, without any foreign ingredient & smell whatever,

but in the preparation of those drugs, which have been introduced by Hahnemann himself, we must also endeavour to prepare the very same article, which had been used by him. For from these articles he obtained his provings and his lists of symptoms, by which the therapeutic application of the medicines was determined. Unless, then, we have the same article, i.e. the identical mode of preparing it, which Hahnemann or the prover used, we can have no certainty in applying the medicine.

— It has been objected by some that Hahnemann's preparations of some of these articles do not come up to the standard of modern science and modern art, that some are prepared

in a quaint way, and others are not chemically pure. I grant the importance of these objections, yet I hold, that it is still a graver matter, to substitute in the place of those drugs, from which Hahnemann obtained his proofings, others, which have not been proved in a like manner. for example: for his proofings of Calcareo carbonica Hahnemann used the oyster shell, which though cleaned of all outside impurities and though heated, is yet by no means the chemically pure carbonate of lime. To substitute the C.P carbonate of lime for the former, as has been proposed and even insisted upon by some on the plea, that the pure precipitated carbonate of lime could be made alike all over the globe,

and that it was more scientific, is decidedly wrong; for there can be no doubt whatever, that there must be some difference in the symptoms, as the human system is sure to be affected differently by a substance directly from the animal kingdom, than by one from the mineral kingdom.

As it is with minerals, so it is with substances derived from the vegetable kingdom - we must follow the process of Hahnemann himself, and wherever it is possible use the juice of the living plant. It is true, that Hahnemann has furnished a new method, by which to preserve vegetable drugs, and he also made provings of the tinctures of such prepared vegetables.

as of Chamomile and Hellebore, but as a general thing, he allways used the juice of the plant itself for his tinctures and dilutions, and preferred it, wherever it could be obtained. — To substitute, therefore, in the place of the tincture from the fresh plant, that obtained from the dried plant of the shops is wrong; for there are certainly some elements in the green plant, which are lost by drying.

The general effects of the two tinctures are no doubt the same, and the tincture of the dried plant is therefore good enough for the ~~purpose~~ of the old school; but in their minute effects they necessarily differ, wherefore the latter tincture does not answer our homoeopathic purposes. ~~~~~

The preparation of Homoeopathic medicines is dependent and based upon the provings, let every preparer of these medicines bear this in mind, and further, let every new prover be particular, and state clearly the source, from which he obtained his substance, and the modus operandi, by which he prepared it for his experiments. Let us be in this respect true followers of our chief, so that we may have as much unity as possible in our Materia Medica.